PROGRAM

8:15 – 8:45 am .............................. Morning Coffee/Tea
8:45 – 9:00 am ......................... Welcome and Introductory Remarks
MICHAEL X. DELLI CARPINI
Annenberg School Dean
BARBIE ZELIZER
Director of the Scholars Program
9:00 – 10:45 am ....................... Producing Identity
FRANCOIS JOST
LARRY GROSS
LAURA GRINDSTAFF
MARK ANTHONY NEAL
Respondent: Mark Andrejevic
Moderator: Keren Tenenboim-Weinblatt, Annenberg Ph.D. Candidate
10:45 – 11:00 am ..................... Refreshments
11:00 – 12:30 pm ..................... Laboring the Self
TANIA LEWIS
GARETH PALMER
HELEN WOOD
Respondent: Katherine Sender
Moderator: Adrienne Shaw, Annenberg Ph.D. Candidate
12:30 – 1:30 pm ....................... Lunch
1:30 – 3:00 pm ......................... Performing the Nation
ZALA VLOVIC
ASWIN PUNATHAMBEEKAR
FABIENNE DARLING-WOLF
Respondent: Marwan Kraidy
Moderator: Oren Livio, Annenberg Ph.D. Candidate
3:00 – 3:15 pm ......................... Refreshments
3:15 – 4:45 pm ......................... Governing the Popular
NICK COULDRY
SEAN JACOBS
STEPHEN COLEMAN
Respondent: Toby Miller
Moderator: Tara Liss-Marino, Annenberg Ph.D. Candidate
4:45 – 5:15 pm ......................... Closing Remarks
MARWAN KRAIDY & KATHERINE SENDER,
Associate Professors, Annenberg School
5:15 – 7:00 pm ......................... Reception
This paper reviews the stakes that political and media institutions entail performances that, in their particularity; displays of power takes a number of forms and is critically examined to position the political and media institutions as “citizens of the world.”

“Just Be Yourself – Only More So”: The Production of Ordinariness and the Ordinariness of Production in Reality Television

LAURA GRINDSTAFF

In this paper I use two case studies to reflect on what it means to produce “ordinariness” in a television context: a participant observation study of daytime talk shows in the late 1990s and a new study of Mira Nair’s TV miniseries Sorority Life. The production efforts of both genres reproduce “authenticity” as taken-for-granted cultural scripts about class and gender rather than representing participants’ “real” biography or personality. I explore discourses of authenticity surrounding “ordinary” people on television, asking them how access to participating on television, who, what shapes television production practices, and how these practices authenticate certain versions of reality over others.

Making Us Feel Mighty Real? Hollywood’s New Double Standard

LARRY GROSS

“Reality” programs, including The Real World, Survivor, Boy Meets Boy and Queer Eye for the Straight Guy, take the “real” gay people for granted; in programs aimed at coveted younger viewers the presence of gay people is a symbolic guarantor of realism. Yet, at the same time, Hollywood’s aspiring young audiences are simultaneously fomenting new forms of political, and gay identity. World citizens “a la français” and the “French” identities.

FABIENNE DARLING-WOLF

This paper explores the stakes that political and media institutions have in influencing national agendas while simultaneously positioning participants—and, by extension, audiences—as “citizens of the world.” It critically examined to position the show as a no less threatening vehicle for the negotiation of multiple modes of “French” citizenship, and a site for the reassessing of French significance in a global context.

Big Brother, Africa is Watching: Reality TV and the Expansion of South African Capital

SEAN JACOBS

For six weeks in 2003, viewers on the African continent were glued to their television screens for Big Brother Africa, in which two dozen contestants were clustered in a house in South Africa’s commercial and media capital Johannesburg. This paper explores the relation between cultural production of shows like Big Brother Africa and South African business’ continental ambitions. I suggest that reality TV shows serve as a convenient means to expose continental markets to South African products, but also to export discourses about race, class, gender and political rights that have been circulating inside South Africa, often in unintended ways.

When Real TV is a Job

FRANÇOIS JOST

This paper argues that the success of reality TV arises from its equidistant positioning from the real world and the world of fiction and the ludic world, giving reality shows a malleability that is observable in strategies of communication surrounding reality TV. That malleability has surfaced in recent court litigations involving participants of Temptation Island (L’Île de la tentation) and the show’s producers, where the court ruled confirmed that participants were role playing a story about people who, through the court’s absence, become adults, are unable to exit the African continent were glued to their television screens for Big Brother Africa, in which two dozen contestants were clustered in a house in South Africa’s commercial and media capital Johannesburg. This paper explores the relation between cultural production of shows like Big Brother Africa and South African business’ continental ambitions. I suggest that reality TV shows serve as a convenient means to expose continental markets to South African products, but also to export discourses about race, class, gender and political rights that have been circulating inside South Africa, often in unintended ways.

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